Deceit Discovered and Malice Manifested

In L. KEY'S late Paper from READING the third of the fourth Month 1693.

By THOMAS ELWOOD.

BEing lately in *London*, I there saw a Paper, Subscribed by *B. Coal*, and recommended to the Press by *C. Harris*, proposing *Expedients for a true Reconciliation among the People of God called Quakers.* At the reading whereof, considering with my self the *manifold Reproaches* that have been cast upon Friends in Print, by divers of that Party that have opposed Friends, whereby Friends have been publickly *traduced* and *defamed*, being represented to the World as *Apostates* and *Innovators*, *Idolaters*, *setters up of Images and Idols*, *Introducers of Popery*, *and but one step from it*, with more of like kind, in bitter Terms expresst, it seemed strange to me that the Authors of that Paper (if they were in earnest in what they proposed) should offer Expedients for a Reconciliation, before they had given Friends and the World satisfaction that they are now sensible we are not what they (or some of their Party) have misrepresented us to be; which their seeming to desire a Reconciliation with us implies, & which we may charitably hope some among them sincerely intend: for they would render themselves guilty of *gross Hypocrisie* indeed, in desiring to be reconciled to us, if they yet believe us to be such. It had been fit therefore that before other Expedients for Reconciliation had been offered by such who had *falsly accused* Friends, and exposed our holy Profession to the Contempt of the prophane, they should have acknowledged their Evil in having so done, and given Proof of their Repentance thereof, that by first clearing us from those *false Accusations*, they might have declared us to be such, as men pretending to Truth and Godliness, might fairly be reconciled to; and might thereby have given us some ground to hope, that as the sincerity of their Repentance should manifest it self, by an honest and hearty *Confessing* and *forsaking* their former Works of *Envy*, *Strife*, *Bitterness*, *Railing*, *False-accusing*, *Division* and *Separation*, we should feel them return in the Peaceable Spirit of Truth, in which we could with gladness receive them, and in which only we can be truly reconciled to them.

When I returned home, I there found a Letter directed to me from *L. Key* of *Reading*, with a Printed sheet inclosed therein, of Terms and Tendency so contrary to the before mentioned Paper signed by *B. C.* and *C. H.* (*That* proposing Expedients for *Peace*, and *Reconciliation*: *This* renewing the *Difference*, and stirring up *Contention* a fresh) that I could not but wonder at it; and the rather because I had understood that *L. Key* (if he himself did not bring up that Paper of *B. Coals* to be printed) was very active and busy in spreading it after it was Printed, which shewed he was privy and consenting thereunto. Comparing the Dates of these two Papers together, I found them both dated from *Reading*, one of them on the 3*d.* the other on the 4*th.* of the 4*th* Month 1693. *not one day between.* And so Contrary are the Terms and tendencies of them, one to the other, that hardly any thing can be more. For in the Proposals for Reconciliation, they say, *Let all Whisperings, Backbitings, Wrath and Envy be watched against and denied:* Yet the other Paper, Signed by *L. Key*, is made up mostly of *Backbitings*, *Wrath* and *Envy*. In their Paper for Reconciliation they say, *All things relating to former Differences, let it be buried in Oblivion on all hands:* Yet in the other Paper, Signed by *L. Key*, the Reader is bid *See the Memorial for the present Generation, and also for that which is to come*; *It gives* (says he) *an account of the Difference that hath happened among the People called Quakers in those parts*; *Also see the* **Revival** *that was published from Reading in* 1692. *it giving an Account how the Difference was brought in there.* (This Paper which he calls the *Revival*, was a single Sheet Signed by *L. Key* himself (*I. R.* and *C. H.* Signing some part of it) in which about half a Score of their Contentious, and abusive Pamphlets are named, and recommended to the Readers view.) Thus while in one Paper Reconciliation is proposed, and that not only former Differences, but all *things relating thereunto*, should be buried in Oblivion (that is, be utterly forgotten, never to be mentioned or remembred any more:) in the other Paper (lest the Difference should dye, or be forgotten) the Titles of those former Printed Papers (wherein, he says, an Account is given of the Difference, and how it was brought in here and there) are reprinted, and the Reader referr'd a fresh to them, for *further information in the Difference*; and particularly to that paper of *J. Raunce* and *C. Harris*, which appears by its Title to be intended for a *lasting Monument* of the Difference, to continue it in Remembrance, that it might not be forgotten either in this Age or the next, and therefore was called *A Memorial for the present Generation, and also for that which is to come.* Was this the way to bury the Difference in Oblivion? Or was this plain and honest dealing in *L. Key*, to reprint the Titles of those Papers, which he himself says give Account of the difference, and recommend them *anew* to his Reader at the *same time* that he is spreading the Expedient for Reconciliation, in which all things relating to former Differences are proposed to be buried in Oblivion on all hands? It would not charge this *double-Dealing* upon the whole Party nor upon any of that Party that are not guilty thereof; but upon such only as take it upon themselves by spreading or owning both those Papers, as some I know have done, particularly *J. Raunce*, who hath sent them abroad together, thereby concerning himself alike in the one as in the other. But I recommend it to the Consideration of all of that Party, who would be accounted sincere and honest, how little it makes for their Reputation to hold Communion with such, and how much it concerns them to clear themselves from owning *L. Key*, and those that abet him, herein, who by this *deceitful Dealing* have manifested themselves to be like those *Workers of Iniquity*, whom the *Psalmist* mentions, (*Psal.* 28. 3.) *which speak peace to their Neighbours but mischief is in their Hearts.* Having premised this, I shall now take notice of some particular passages in *L. Key's* Paper.

First, I observe the Account I formerly gave of that *Scandalous* Marriage (of the Woman that lay with her Father) promoted and highly contended for by *J. R.* and *C. H.* and carried on against the mind of Friends, hath stuck so fast on them ever since, that they have not been able to clear themselves of it, though they have laboured at it with all their might, and used many tricks to do it. First they gave out that I writ the Certificate, insinuating thereby that I owned that Marriage as well as they. But I having cleared that point in my Answer to *L. Key's* former Paper, and thereby laid their *Deceit* more open, their Agent *L. Key* in his last Sheet hath published a Paper Subscribed by the Woman her self, which he introduces thus, *viz.* [*And a Paper is made publick, that was left by the Woman that he hath so much reviled, and is not in being to Answer for her self*] Who, thus should read these Words, and knew not the Business before hand, but would conclude the Woman at the time of her death, had left this Paper behind her to clear her self of that Report? Whereas in plain Truth, the Paper there mentioned, was by the Woman her self, delivered to the Monthly Meeting (before she Married) under pretence (*not of Clearing*, but) of *Condemning* her self for what she had done; and is the very same Paper I formerly mentioned in my Book called *The Account from Wickham examined*, &c. p. 4. The Original of which Paper as delivered by the Woman, I have in my keeping, writen (if I do not mistake the Hand) in *C. Harris* his own hand Writing, by whom it was then understood to be drawn up for her, and was so favourably Worded, that it seemed rather to palliat and excuse her Offence, than condemn it. Yet that Paper, as *L. Key* hath now Printed it (though *C. H.* did what he could to mince the Matter in favour of that bad Woman) plainly proves what I have written of her, acknowledging that it was reported she did Lodge with (which is a fuller Expression than to Lye with, implying a continued use or course of lying with) her Father, which, as to Matter of Fact, *she doth not deny*, but alledges it was with no evil intent, &c. And though her *Advocate C. H.* in drawing up that Paper for her, to extenuate her Fault, did put in the Word [*sometimes*] and [*in the time of his aged weakness, and when he was sick unto death*] yet it is known the Report was not so: but her lying with her Father was spoken of by her Neighbours of the world with *Abhorrence*, and charged upon her as a *Scandal to Religion*. And those Grave Women Friends whom at the Request of the Mens Meeting, the Womans Meeting sent to Examin her, and inquire into that Business, made report to the mens Meeting, in as modest terms as they could, that they found *she had behaved her self very immodestly in her Carriage towards her Father.* So that the more these men *stirr* in this *foul* Matter, the worse they make both it and themselves to *smell.*

Another shift they have invented to excuse their altering the Certificate, and bringing that Marriage among Friends, is, *That it was then a time of Persecution, and the People that owned the House were not willing a Meeting should be there.* This *L. Key* says he *has been told*, & this *J. Raunce* hath written to me and others: But this (so far as I can find) is another *deceitful Artifice of theirs*, quite void of Truth. For I have not only recollected my own Memory, and inquired of other Friends, but searched also the general *Record* of the Sufferings of Friends in this County, & do not find there was any suffering upon Friends in these Parts, for Meetings either then, or a considerable time before or after. But since they have affirmed it was a time of Persecution, let them name, if they can any one Friend that suffered about that time, on the account of Meeting; in this Country. If they do not, it may be concluded they cannot; and that this pretence (of its being then a time of Persecution) is but an *invented falshood*, to excuse their dirty Doings.

He complains that *Nothing will serve me but an Answer in Print.* He mistakes, if he and they that set him on work, had honesty enough to *acknowledge their faults*, that would serve me as well, and themselves, better then any answer he or they could make. I say [*they that set him on work*] because I look on him but as a Key, and others at *Wickham* to be the Hands that *turn* him *forward* or *backward*, at their pleasures, who being conscious to themselves of the badness of their Cause, are not willing to appear publickly in it themselves, and therefore have set this *Tool* to Work, who can *blunder* on at any rate, as little regarding to write Truth, as knowing how to write *common Sence.* In which respect I think it, I confess an Unhappiness to me, to have to do with such an one: For one had better deal with ten wise men, than one that thinks himself so, and is nothing less.

They are angry that, while their *abusive* and *slanderous* Papers will not go off, unless they be given away, my just Defences are Printed and sold without Charge to me. This made *I. R.* and *C. H.* formerly inquire, whether they were not *paid for out of the publick Stock*; and this makes *L. Key* now say of me, *If he did pay for what he doth out of his own Pocket, I am ready to think me should not hear so often from him.* This is neither Christian nor Manly; but silly and Cowardly: for since they hear no oftner from me than they *assault* Truth, Friends and me (what I have written to them being only *Defensive*) so far as I remember) it seems they would be glad that I were *disabled* from answering them, that so they might at pleasure rail, revile, abuse, reproach, defame, bely, slander Truth, Friends and me, in Print, and hope to be secure from being Answered, at least by me. How much this makes for their Credit, let them consider, and the Reader Judge. Yet let them not deceive themselves herein, but know assuredly, were I (as they wish) uncapable of Answering them, through inability to pay for Printing, should they not thereby escape unreproved.

In my last, I charged *L. Key* with having *changed* the express and plain Words of my Book, and thereby *falsified* the intent and meaning of them. As that was too manifest to be denyed, so he had not *honesty* enough to confess his fault, nor *ingenuity* enough to be ashamed of it. But in his last paper, not attempting to clear himself, nor answer my Charge, but thinking to wind himself off by a *Wile*, he has run himself into a most *foolish Absurdity.* He says, *The Certificate* (of that Marriage before mentioned *bears date the* 12*th. of the* 1*st. Month in the year* 1677. And a few lines after, says, *The old man that set up the Womans Meeting* (so scornfully and contemptibly doth he think and write of that honourable Servant of God *G. F.*) *did come to Reading to endeavour it in the* 6*th. Month in the year* 1681, Then he adds, *Observe, this was above four years before that Marriage that* T. E. *hath made all this Clamour about.* Is not this a rare Accomptant, who hath made the year 81. to be 4. years before the year 77? This is so *obvious* an Error, that as none but such a *Fumbler* would have made it, so had he not been blind he might have seen and corrected it. But he, being *blinded with envy*, and thinking to twist himself out of the *Toyl* he had run himself into before, plunged on Headlong into this *Brake*, without fear or wit, Consideration or common Sense. This one would think were enough to have drawn blushes into the Cheeks of any one, that deserved the name of Man. But so *stupid* was he, that, thinking he had gained some Advantage by the *Project*, he falls to improving it, saying of me thus [*So he was right in saying, it was before any Marriage had gone to the Womens Meetings.*] This he infers from his notable Discovery, that 81. was 4. *years before* 77. but (not to let his *folly* excuse his *falshood*) if I was *right* in saying as I did, let him and all that abet him, consider how *wrong* he was in *altering* those Words of mine, and instead thereof, affirming I said, *It was before the Womens Meetings were set up.* A sort of *Forgery*, the guilt whereof I still charge upon him.

Notwithstanding this ridiculous blunder that he has made, so void of sense he is, that, as if he had exposed some weakness on my part, he scornfully reflects this sentence on me, *Great men are not always wise:* Not understanding the Proverb that says (*Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*) No man is always wise. But alas! there is a sort of Great men that are *never* wise (never were, nor ever are like to be) and they that know *L. Key*, know *he is none of the least men*, either in *Person* or *Conceit*: He reflects on the Approvers of my Work: but I think the Approvers of his will get little Credit by it, unless he mend his hand at it. And indeed it is an Argument of *judicial blindness*, and great *Infatuation of mind*, in him and them that promote his Paper, that they should spread it about as they do, without seeing the *shameful blunder* he has made in it. He adds another Text out of *Job*, which begins thus, *Upright men shall be astonished at this*, and ends thus, *I cannot find one wise man among you.* Job. 17. 8, 10. But surely if he and his Approvers, do but once as clearly prove, as he has confidently asserted, that 81. *was* 4. *years before* 77. all men that hear it, will be astonished at that, and I shall be forced to acknowledge, there are *many wise men* among them such as they be.

Three great Instances he has already given; one of his *Dishonesty*, in altering my Words; another of his *Hypocrisy*, in spreading a Paper of Proposals for Reconciliation and Peace, and at the same time printing another Paper to renew Contention and War; A third, of his *Folly* in computing the times. Now, to manifest that his *Malice* is equal to the rest, he here repeats his former Slander about my having suffered my Father to want. Which having in his former Sheet delivered upon an [*it hath been said*] I returned upon him self, shewing how basely I had been abused in that case by *C. Harris*, and another before, who when publickly called to Account for it, slunk back and durst not undertake to make good their Charge. Whereupon I laid it upon *L. Key* to name whom he had heard say it, to free himself from being reputed the Author as well as Publisher of that envious slander. Which as it behoved him to have done, so I conclude he would have done it, had he been able to have named any. But though he [illegible] *renews his slander*, yet he names no Author of it; but says, *it hath been so said by those that* &c. So that his Proof that it hath been so said, is saying again, *that it hath* been so said, which depends only on his credit, who in this case, deserves none.

He cavils also at my Fathers being *buried in that part of the ground*, *where* (he says) *they did use to Bury Strangers and Vagabounds.* Had not he and his imployers, been *Strangers to Christianity and Civility*, they might have imployed themselves better than to ride so many miles as some of them have done (perhaps 20. or more) to see if they could pick up a Stone at my Fathers Grave to throw at me. I confess I am not so well acquainted with the Grave Yard, as to understand the *difference of Places* in it, or whether some parts of it be *more consecrated* than others: Yet methinks, had he and his Informers remembred their *former Principles* they should not have quarrelled with me for that. However, the Place for the Grave was not of my appointing: for, being prevented from being at the Burial, by a Message my Father received in his Sickness, that my Sister lay then sick in *London*, *near unto death*, after I had waited upon my Father until he had finished his life, and given direction for his Interment, I hasted up to my Sister at *London*, as thinking I might be more serviceable to the Living, than to the Dead, and knew not in what part of the Ground the Grave was made, till my return from *London*, I went thither to discharge the Charge of his Sickness and Funeral. This at my return from *London*, I went thither to discharge the Charge of his Sickness and Funeral. This all men knew *long since*, which (had they been men of common Ingenuity) might have prevented, as it may now Answer that other idle cavil about my not being present when my Father was laid in the Ground.

To conclude, as I neither need nor desire favour, nor expect Justice from men so *filled* with *Envy*, and *devoted* to *Mischief*: So I am glad that after all the pains they have taken, their running and riding, travelling the Countries, from *Wickham*, *Reading*, and other parts, viewing the place, visiting my Fathers Grave, (above seven years after his death) not in love to him, but hatred to me (even *J. R.* himself, going to the Grave, who is old enough, one would think, to have been wiser, and has known that which would have made him better) examining Persons, Sifting matters, asking many cunning and tempting Questions of the people of the World, to draw forth if they could, some matter of complaint against me, yea provoking (not to say suborning) some to pretend they had shewed kindness to my Father, that they might thereby either oblige me to reward such, (for nothing) or upbraide me with ungratitude, if I did not (while I not suspecting such *unmanly baseness* among them sat innocently still) they have not been able to pick or raise up any thing, that might answer their Pains, or gratify their envy, but instead of defaming me (which they designed) they have sufficiently defamed themselves, in discovering so ill a mind. To whom yet, for all their evil Will, and evil Acting towards me, I wish nothing but Good. And though I cannot say of some of them (as our Lord said of others of old) *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*, being perswaded that most of them that have a hand in this Work *do sin against knowledge*, as knowing they do evil: yet, in pity to them, I can, and do sincerely say, *Father, if their day be not quite over, give them Repentance, and forgive them.*

Hunger-Hill, 4th. of 6th. Month 1693. T. E.

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